

Between this legislation and the other peer support measure recently passed in the VA MISSION Act, this body continues to underscore its commitment to expanding peer support at VA. I appreciate the hard work Mr. COFFMAN has put into this issue and look forward to supporting his efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), my good friend and a senior member of the Veterans Affairs' Committee. He is also both an Army and Marine veteran.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 4635, the Peer-2-Peer Counseling Act.

Currently, women veterans represent over 9 percent of our Nation's veterans, and that number is expected to increase to 15 percent by the year 2030. As more women veterans utilize VA healthcare, it is critical for the VA to update and improve services for women veterans. One area that warrants our particular attention for improved services is VA mental health counseling services for women veterans.

An alarming statistic from VA's 2016 suicide data report noted that the "risk of suicide was 2.4 times higher among female veterans when compared with civilian adult females," and it also noted "rates of suicide increased more among women than men in the same study."

Unfortunately, many women veterans have experienced sexual trauma and PTSD while serving in the military. Some women veterans are suffering from other mental health conditions from multiple combat tours of duty and are at risk of suicide and becoming homeless.

The Peer-2-Peer Counseling Act addresses these issues by requiring the Secretary of the VA to ensure a sufficient number of volunteer peer support counselors are available to facilitate peer-to-peer counseling and assist women veterans with gender-specific care and services.

H.R. 4635 will increase access to vital mental health opportunities within the VA for women veterans. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Peer-2-Peer Counseling Act to better serve the growing women veteran population.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4635 to better meet the needs of the program and provide needed services to many more veterans.

I will mention one other bill that just passed the House, H.R. 2147, the Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act, which builds upon a very successful program that essentially provides VA liaisons or veteran justice outreach program officers within these veteran treatment courts that facilitate VA services, whether drug and alcohol, mental health, or other services, to veterans who would otherwise be incarcerated. They have fallen into the criminal justice system often related

to their military service, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health disorders, where they have problems adjusting from military life to civilian life.

What this program does is provide rehabilitative services in court for our veterans. With the VA in support, it keeps these veterans at a very successful rate. I think in the 18th Judicial District in my congressional district, the veterans court has a 73 percent success rate in keeping these veterans out of the criminal justice system by providing VA rehabilitative services for them. I think an expansion of this program is so important.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for having passed this bill unanimously just previously today.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTRY), my good friend and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Ms. ESTRY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4635, the Peer-2-Peer Counseling Act. I want to thank my friend and colleague, Mr. COFFMAN, for his leadership on this very important issue.

The bill we are considering today will help ensure that our women veterans are fully equipped to transition back to civilian life.

Women veterans are the single fastest growing group of veterans in America. They face many challenges unique to our women warriors. Women veterans need access to peer counselors who are trained in recovery from military sexual trauma, post-traumatic stress, and mental health conditions that they may be struggling with.

I think it is also worth noting that women veterans are disproportionately juggling childcare, which complicates their ability to seek treatment elsewhere. They have special needs and experiences.

Our women veterans should have the opportunity to receive the advice and counseling from someone who knows what they have been and are still going through as women warriors. We need to help ensure that they have the resources to succeed.

The VA must also do more to help ensure that every veteran is able to benefit from peer support and has awareness and access to those services. That is why I am so pleased that this bill today requires the VA to conduct outreach to ensure that our women veterans know how to get access to this important and valuable assistance.

Too often, I hear from veterans in my home State of Connecticut that they are simply unaware that these services are available. We may offer them through the VA, but if our veterans don't know they are there, they aren't going to get the benefits they deserve. In many cases, programs exist to help our women veterans, but the veterans don't know they are there.

Peer support counselors have been through a transition before. They understand what it takes, and they can be particularly effective in meeting the needs of our women warriors.

With the fastest growing number of women in this country who are veterans, now nearly 2 million veterans in America—think about that, 2 million—we need to do better by them through the VA. This is an important peer-to-peer counseling support program. I am delighted that we came together as a committee with bipartisan support to support this bill.

We are also urging other legislation named in honor of Deborah Sampson, the first woman to serve this country, to serve America in the Revolutionary War, who dressed as a man.

It is important that we reassure today's women in Active Duty and those transitioning out that we will take care of them and their families as they make that important transition to civilian life. They have earned our support in the military. We need to provide it to them as they transition out.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues on the committee, the chairman and the ranking member, and Mr. COFFMAN for their important work.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in passing H.R. 4635, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I, too, encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I want to thank both sides of the aisle for bringing this forward.

As a physician and a veteran, I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that peer-to-peer counseling is the way to go. This legislation will help our female veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4635, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### BRINGING PEACE TO THE KOREAN PENINSULA

(Mr. MARSHALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the President's efforts to bring peace to the Korean Peninsula.

For almost seven decades, the United States and North Korea have been adversaries, but this week we witnessed a

groundbreaking first step for both nations and global security as a whole.

While much work remains to be done, the commitment to recover the remains of 7,802 American soldiers who were prisoners of war or missing in action during the Korean war deserves a special recognition. Bringing these fallen heroes home will give long overdue closure to the loved ones and families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

We must deal firmly with North Korea while taking steps to ensure a brutal war is not repeated.

□ 1700

#### NATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, over the past 100 years, the life expectancy of men has declined in comparison with that of women. Women now live, on average, 5 years longer than men.

There is a silent crisis of men's health in America. To reverse the decline, we must be silent no more. Too often, men are foregoing routine health screenings, and they are dying because of it.

Colon cancer, heart disease, high cholesterol, diabetes, all of these are treatable or even preventable, if you get screened. Screenings aren't scary. They don't hurt.

This morning, my staff and I were screened by healthcare professionals on Capitol Hill with the Men's Health Network. Knowledge is power, ladies and gentlemen, for my staff, for myself, and for our families.

Just a few minutes ago, my fellow chairman of the Men's Health Caucus, Congressman MULLIN of Oklahoma, joined me to introduce a resolution recognizing June 11 to 17 as National Men's Health Week. I encourage each of you to join us on this resolution and help end the silent crisis of men's health in America.

#### RECOGNIZING THE MORRISVILLE STATE BREWING PROGRAM

(Ms. TENNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the teaching brewery at Morrisville State College, which, despite opening just last fall, has won the title as Grand National Champion brewing school in North America at the 2018 U.S. Open College Beer Championship. The contest, open to any college or university offering brewing courses, is held to determine the best future brewers in North America.

Morrisville State College currently offers the courses as electives but hopes to have a full curriculum for the fall of 2019, making Morrisville the

first State university of New York with a 4-year brewing program. Morrisville's program fits right in with upstate New York, which has several well-known breweries that bring jobs, creativity, and originality to the region, including the F.X. Matt Brewing Company, the fourth oldest family brewery in the United States; the Empire Brewing Factory in Cazenovia; and also the Cortland Farm Distillery and Brewery in Cortland, New York.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Morrisville State College on becoming the number one brewing school in North America their first time out. It took a lot of dedication from the students from Morrisville. I look forward to tasting some of their products as we move into the next semester.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS EMERGENCY

(Mr. CARDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDENAS. Mr. Speaker, right now we have a human rights emergency at our borders. ICE agents are ripping children from their mothers' arms. These are babies as young as 11 months. They are holding these children in facilities that are so full that now Trump wants to build tent cities to house more children.

There are reports of ICE agents telling parents that they are taking their child to give them a bath, and then the parents don't see their baby again.

Think about that: No notice. No due process. Just silent, cruel separation.

This is happening on our American soil. This is the policy of the Trump administration. ICE has an \$8 billion budget, and this is what our taxpayer dollars are buying: holding babies, cold and alone, in what are internment camps for little children.

My fellow colleagues, we are not a country that follows a selfish, cold-hearted dictator. We are the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

#### RECOGNIZING PATROL OFFICER ANTHONY CHRISTIE

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Savannah, Georgia, Police Department Patrol Officer Anthony Christie, who lost his life in the line of duty on May 25 at the age of 37.

He is remembered as a passionate person who was deeply devoted to his fellow officers and community while simply loving his job. Before joining the police force, Officer Christie served in the United States Navy, where he

earned a number of accolades, including the Navy Good Conduct Medal and the Global War on Terror Service Medal.

He carried this excellent work with him from the Navy over to the police force. In one mission, he rescued a child who was abducted and abandoned in the woods. His fellow officers always wanted to work with Officer Christie because of his calming presence and their respect for his work.

Officer Christie's passing is a reminder to us all of the danger officers must endure when they go to work to keep us and our families safe. I encourage everyone to thank our first responders on a daily basis, not only in the times when we need them the most.

To Officer Christie and his family, we offer our deepest condolences. Thank you for your service.

May God bless.

#### SCOTT PRUITT

(Mr. HUFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, the Trump administration is the most corrupt in our country's long history. They are enriching themselves and rewarding special interests and campaign donors like nothing we have ever seen. If you need proof, look no further than our polluter in chief, Scott Pruitt.

Every day brings another Pruitt bombshell. Just today, news broke that, last year, he enlisted a top EPA aide to ask big Republican donors to help his wife find a job, eventually securing her a position with a conservative political group, Judicial Crisis Network. We have learned about similar efforts involving Pruitt's attempt to secure a Chick-fil-A franchise for his wife using EPA resources.

He raised millions of dollars as attorney general of Oklahoma from oil, gas, and coal companies for his campaign. He chaired a dark-money group that organized State challenges to clean water and clean air protections. He sued the EPA 14 times as Oklahoma AG to block public health protections while raking in campaign contributions from his polluter co-litigants.

He is facing more than 12 Federal investigations into his corruption, influence peddling, and waste of millions in taxpayer dollars on his lavish lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, in any other administration, at any other time, he would have been fired long ago. It is time for Pruitt to go, and it is time for Congress to do something about the toxic corruption in the Trump administration.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF C-SPAN

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, recently, I was invited by a young friend,